

# Maryland SHIP "Health Action" Newsletter

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June 14, 2013

## Two Maryland Counties Named America's 50 Healthiest Counties for Kids



A recent report by U.S. News features a ranking of America's 50 healthiest counties for kids. This new set of rankings released as part of the [2013-2014 U.S. News Best Children's Hospitals](#) highlights counties with fewer infant deaths, low-birth-weight babies, deaths from injuries, teen births and children in poverty. This report serves as the first national, county-level assessment of how health and environmental factors affect the well-being of children under the age of 18.

Included in this ranking are two Maryland counties: Montgomery and Howard Counties. With a poverty rate of 8.8% compared to the nation average of 24%, Montgomery County ranked 9 with a score of 90.1 out of 100. Howard County's low teen birth rate of 12.8 (per 1,000) compared to the national average of 44, ranked the county 26 with a score of 85.4 out of 100. Variables included in these rankings, such as low birth weight, infant mortality and teen pregnancy are more directly related to health outcomes compared to more indirect variables including access to primary care physicians, air quality and parks.

Click [here](#) to read the U.S. News report.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for reducing infant deaths.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for reducing low birth weight births.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for increasing the proportion of pregnancies that are intended.

## Maryland Expands School Breakfast Participation



**Maryland Hunger Solutions**

*Ending hunger and promoting well-being*

According to a recent report published by Maryland Hunger Solutions, Maryland has the highest median income in the country, yet in 2011, 13.5% of children were living below the

poverty level. Families living below the poverty level struggle with food insecurity, with 20.8% in 2010 having difficulties feeding their families. The federal School Breakfast Program has served as a vital tool to solve this problem in an effort to reduce childhood hunger, promote good health, and improve student achievement. During the past five years, Maryland has made significant strides in expanding school breakfast participation across the state through its efforts to encourage schools to adopt classroom breakfast programs and other after school strategies.

For the first time, more than half of all low-income Maryland students who participated in school lunch also participated in school breakfast during the 2011-2012 school year. Additionally, the number of schools who provide breakfast to students increased by 14.4%, resulting in 131,936 low-income students in Maryland starting the day with a nutritious school breakfast. Maryland now ranks above the national average in states where schools are participating in the school breakfast program. However, Maryland has yet to achieve the goal of 70 low-income children participating in the School Breakfast Program for every 100 in the National School Lunch Program.

Click [here](#) to read the full report from Maryland Hunger Solutions. View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for increasing access to healthy foods.

### Upcoming Smoke Free Campaign Kick Off Event



On June 21st, The Maryland Center at Bowie State University will host its Maryland Regional African American Tobacco Control Networks Tobacco/Smoke Free Campaign Kick Off event. The event is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m., at the Bowie State University Fine & Performing Arts Building. The purpose of the event is to inform the general public, tobacco advocates, state officials, and community members about campus and community based campaigns and policy initiatives to reduce the use of tobacco. Guest speakers include Dr. Carlessia Hussein, Director, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities and Dr. Donald Shell, Director, Bureau of Cancer and Chronic Diseases at the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Click [here](#) to read the press release for this event.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for reducing cigarette smoking among adults.

### Addressing Cultural Competency and Promoting

## Health Literacy



On Monday, June 24 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., the Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform will explore the importance of health literacy and cultural competency in getting access to health coverage and care. This webinar will discuss the design and implementation of Maryland's Connector Program and key elements necessary for success. Speakers will highlight how Maryland's initiatives fit within the context of the ACA and national initiatives for language access and other key components, the role of the new Connector Program in supporting the principles of cultural competency and health literacy, and the elements and application of cultural competency and health literacy training and its impact on communities.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register for this event.

## News from the Office of Primary Care Access

### Registration is Now Open for the 2013 Rural Action Assembly Conference

The Maryland State Office of Rural Health (SORH), the Rural Maryland Council (RMC) and the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) are collaborating to host a day and a half conference on October 17-18, 2013 at Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen, MD. The conference will focus on defining key issues for Maryland's rural communities. Through the integration of key rural stakeholders, we will work towards creating sustainable rural communities and plan for the future and prosperity of rural Maryland. Click [here](#) to register.

Would you like to recognize an individual(s) or an organization(s) for their outstanding efforts in the economic development, sustainability, and/or health of Maryland's rural communities during the 2013 Rural Action Assembly Celebration Dinner on October 17th? Click [here](#) to learn more about this year's awards and to fill out an awards nomination form.

## Building a Healthier America

On June 19th, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will be holding a meeting looking at Building a Healthier America and how to support health in communities - specifically, during early childhood. The meeting will be held from 9:00am - 12:30pm at the

Columbus Club in Washington, D.C. or interested participants can register to participate by webcast.

Click [here](#) to view the agenda for the event.

Click [here](#) to RSVP to attend in-person.

Click [here](#) to RSVP to attend the webcast.

#### **Upcoming Events**

June 23 - 26, 2013

2013 National Rural Assembly

Bethesda, MD

Click [here](#) for more information.